Ireland. A Satire. 1823.

IRELAND;

A SATIRE.

TO THE DIFFERENT GRAND JURIES OF IRELAND, AND TO THE MEN WHO CONSTITUTE THEM, EACH AND ALL, THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE "RESPECTFULLY" INSCRIBED BY ONE WHO WISHES WHAT HE DARES NOT HOPE—THEIR IMPROVEMENT.

"Thus much I've dared to do!—how far my lay
"Hath wronged these righteous times let others say!
"This let the world, that knows not how to spare,
"Yet seldom blames unjustly, now declare!"

LORD BYRON.

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PREFACE.

If I should be accused, as I have been, of rendering general by my inscription the censures passed on the conduct of *individuals,* (however numerous) I could say, that this is neither the intention nor fair construction of my words. I am well aware that there is a minority, respectable in number, more so in character, that could not be included in the language I apply to the objects of my *Satire;* yet, if the *Address* includes them, it is that they may join me in reprobating the men and measures they must detest and despise as I do.

To the rest I have only to observe, that I am an Englishman, and therefore beyond the reach of one principal Irish weapon—"blarney;" a soldier, therefore perfectly ready to meet, at any others, those who may fancy themselves, or rather their conduct, pointed at. If I have not thought it necessary to annex a name to my humble production, it is because I am sufficiently known in the neighbourhood in which I write.

Callan, co. Kilkenny,
June 3d, 1822.

IRELAND;

A SATIRE.

Erin! lost Erin! as I pondered o'er
Thy classic page of legendary lore, (1)
I drank, with thirsting heart, the lines that told
The vanished glories of thy days of old;—
That told how once to Tara's royal hall
Thy proud chiefs gathered at the banquet call;
How, with their brows of snow, and eyes of flame,
And hearts as pure and bright, thy loveliest came,
While, prouder yet and lovelier, swept along
The mingling tide of harp-strings and of song! 10

Where are ye! Erin's stately maidens? Where
Are ye! the warrior guardians of the fair?

Where are ye! masters of the mighty lyre?
Have ye left none on whom your robe of fire
Fell, like the prophet's mantle, when he trod
The blazing car that whirled him to his God?

Hush! for they answer!—" Stranger, go! and turn
" The lonely cairn that hides the lonelier urn!
" Beneath those stones, in silence dark and deep,
" Our chiefs, our maidens, and our minstrels sleep;— 20
" The song is hushed for ever!—the harp's thrill
" Hath ceased on Tara's desolated hill,
" Where vainly rests thine anxious eye,—nor sees
" A stone of Tara's mouldered palaces:—
" The song is hushed for ever!—Ask not why—
" The key-note of that song was LIBERTY!"

Sleep on, sleep on! departed ones!—your tomb
Cradles the birth of heroes yet to come;
And Freedom, resting on your cairn's grey stone,
Smiles on the plains that *yet* shall be her own. 30
Sleep! while I summon Erin's dwindled race
To flock to judgment o'er your resting-place.

Lords of the men that scorn ye! ye, whose food
Is as their wasted flesh, whose drink their blood;

Whose famished Helots till their father's soil,
That yields its plenty but to mock their toil;
Whose tyrant wills are their more tyrant laws;
Judges and jurors in your own dark cause;
Stand forth!—at conscience' silent call, appear!
For I *will* sing, and ye *shall* crouch, and hear. 40

Slaves of the men that fear ye! ye whose hands
Bleed as ye dig their tributary lands;
Whose hearts' last drops are wrung for them; whose care
Gives them the plenty that ye may not share;
Who creep before Earth's creeping things, and crawl
Before her lowest, lower than them all;
If ye have ears,—for hearts ye have,—attend,
And, slaves and victims, hear and own a friend.

Stand forth, ye cringing tyrants! cowering slaves!
Stand forth, as equal as ye fill your graves! 50
While, if ye dare to listen, I may tell
What ye have heard too long, and known too well.
——Thou! for to thee in other days was given
A seat amidst the thousand thrones of heaven:
Goddess of vengeance and eternal right,
Inspire the song that dares invoke thy might!
Lend me, to vindicate thy slighted name,
Thy lash of serpents and thy sword of flame;

A lash and sword the slaves shall learn to kiss
That deem thou art no more,—insulted Nemesis. 60

Ye! who on Spain's red fields the victors stood,
Tell, who fought foremost on those fields of blood;
Who, when the Egyptian sands with gore were wet,
Brought to the charge the levelled bayonet;
Who strove on India's burning plains; and who
Led on the storm that burst on Waterloo?
Shades of the slain! I wait *your* answer;—come
From out the caverns of your distant tomb;
From where your native shamrocks greenly spread
Their emerald verdure o'er your country's dead, 70
And deck the dewy turf, where Erin's son
Sleeps 'midst the wild-flowers of the fields he won.

Ye, who, retiring from the strife of swords,
Guided at home the varying war of words,
Tell who, 'midst senates' and the world's applause,
Stood forth in Erin's and in Freedom's cause,—
Who poured the stream of eloquence along
With words like spells—with speech like Erin's song.

Champions of Liberty! and Friends of Man!—
Grattan, Flood, Curran, Plunkett, Sheridan!— 80

Come o'er me; bending from your clouds, inspire
My tongue with thunder, and my pen with fire.

Oh! vainly eloquent! as vainly brave!
Why have ye lived to shew *ye* could not save?
And left, for those that like ye dare to hope,
Despair, neglect, the scaffold, and the rope.

Farewell, my harp! I hang *thee* in the breeze;
I will not taint *thy* chords with themes like these:
But o'er those chords the night wind's breathings driven
Shall wake thine echoes to the sighs of Heaven. 90
In ears like those that hear, thy nobler strain,
Like balm upon the dead, were poured in vain;
But ears and hearts like theirs might wake from death
To listen to the bagpipe's squealing breath.
Come then, my bonny bagpipe! let us try
The magic of thy drowsy melody;
And let us, teaching them to fear and hate us,
Call to a jig the "posse comitatûs."
The borrowed plumes drop off from those that wore 'em—
And lo! the wretched jack-daws of the "quorum." 100

Let some, the *heroes* of the scene, relate
Their everlasting tale of "ninety-eight:"

Recount the deeds they did, the fields they won;
(Fields never fought, and deeds that ne'er were done)
And vainly puff the brazen cheeks of Fame
To fill her trumpet with their own dread name.
Let them, with stare of silly gravity,
Recount the dangers which they dared—to fly!
And, from the perils of the past, assume
The darker dangers that are yet to come. 110
To me an humbler theme, and lowlier song,
And strains of meaner melody, belong;
For still the present's mournful page contains
An ample margin for my critic strains,
Where, as the coronal of song I twine,
Their darling heroes shall for once be mine.
What boots it now to sing your deeds of old?
Your creed forsaken, and your country sold!
No! let me tell how *once!*—how *now* ye live,
Selling the justice that ye swore to *give:* 120
While barracks, bridges, churches, jails and roads,
Your "glebes" and bridewells—lesser thieves' abodes,
Give rogues at liberty the power to rob,
And all, the very gibbet, is a *job!* (2)
Time was, when once, beneath Pitt's high command,
Bank-notes and warfare blessed the thankless land,
And ye, whom thus my gentle strains address,
Strutted, in boots—"Squireens,"—or worse,—or less! (3)

Till, as of old from out the mud of Nile,
Crawled the rank vermin o'er the shuddering soil; 130
So, from congenial filth create, ye rose
Contractors, agents, justices, or Jews!
And now, since times, alas, so changed, must yield
A lessened produce of the farm and field,
And like your corn, hay, butter, pigs and sheep,
The last and least, your consciences, sell cheap,
Ye strive to stand where once before ye stood,
And job, since *that* alone is *gain*, in *blood!*(4)

Hark! through the glen on midnight echoes borne,
Float the hoarse windings of the dread cowhorn! 140
The slumbering "justice" starts, and hears afar
The rustic note that speaks the voice of war,
Draws the snug curtain closer round his bed,
And quakes or snores beneath the coverlid.
Hark! heard ye not the louder sounds that rise,
"Making night hideous,"—to the echoing skies?
His worship trembling heard the peal,—and now
Even the red nightcap quits his bristling brow:
Where, as he rolls his restless bulk in vain,
He swears or prays, but dare not sleep again! 150

Who comes, marauding through the midnight shade,
Begirt with many a bayonet and blade?

And routs here, there, about, before, behind,
Brisk "as the devil in a gale of wind;"
Or trusts his lengthening reveries, and deems
Himself, poor man!—important as he seems?
Can this, can this be he whom late we saw
Spread the dread page of heaven's eternal law;
Lead us to kneel before th' Almighty's throne,
And offer there our tribute, and his own? 160
Now through the gloom he grandly strides along,
The mighty leader of a motley throng,
And grasps, what suits, indeed, his reverend fist ill,
The brazen handle of a huge horse-pistol.
Come! in the train unseen we'll take our stations,
And watch "his reverend worship's" operations,
While the mild servant of a gentle God
Drags from his straw, and sends poor Pat to "quod;"
"Pitches to hell" the "Roman wretch," who never hence
Dares to annoy again his "worship's reverence," 170
And justice gives, refuses, and abuses,
Precisely as his reverend worship chuses!

Those whom I call to aid me, though I scorn ye,
Persuasive goddess of "the groves of Blarney,"
Lend me thy magic power to paint the scene,
Thy dulcet breath of "pratees and poteen,"

So may I, in befitting song or story,
Record his deeds and register his glory!

Lo! as I sing, the cabin's shattered door
Resists his angry reverence no more,(5) 180
And Pat and Shelah, starting from their straw,
Forget the "man of peace," in him of "martial law,"
While various questions, asked with due precision,
For guns, pikes, blunderbusses, ammunition,
With endless "bothering" perplex their heads,
And keep the shivering wretches from their beds!

See! where with peeping eyes and prying nose
Through the dim hut the chief sagacious goes,
And seeks, amid the litter Paddy slept on,
Some never seen yet still suspected weapon; 190
Calls pitchforks pikes, and fancies in his bustle
A brazen candlestick a pistol's muzzle!

Away! away! yon envious beams, away!
His dreams of glory and of fame decay!
Bright breaks the morn, and midnight's boasted work is
Confined to frightening pigs, ducks, geese, and turkeys:
Vastly diminished in their own conceit,
The troop, and last the justice-chief, retreat,

And "re infectâ," our innocuous parson
Retires, and waits for night to carry the same farce on! 200

Hail to ye! ye, whose fortunes or whose fates,
The devil knows why, have made ye "*magistrates!!!*"
Without the brains or more important wig
That might have made ye wise, or yet *look* big;
Who, lest your cares be haply unrewarded,
Plunder the wretched fold ye should have guarded,
And, through the gainful mysteries of "jobbing,"
Practice the magisterial trade of robbing!

If there be one (*perchance* I deem amiss!)
The whiskered bully of a cause like this!(6) 210
Let him come forth! and answering to my call,
Take up the gauntlet that defies ye all!
In such a cause I trust to find your swords
Should fall on mine as edgeless as your words;
And doubt alike, alike despise your skill
To point a pistol or a grey-goose quill;
Sure that parental Nature blunts the tools
She means to give to children, Rogues, and Fools.

Ye, who with heads that match your feelings dull,
Knit the grave brow and wag the unfurnished skull, 220

Come from your "nate slate castles," from your "groves,"
Where scarce one furze-bush in the wild wind moves;
Come from your "mounts," where, 'midst the unvaried plain,
Ye style six boggy acres "the demesne:"
Lay by your chains and whiskey, while ye come
And hear me sing your deeds and tell your doom!

How oft at noon, when 'neath the burning sun
On England's plains the reaper's work was done,
And 'midst the sheaves in rich profusion cast,
They paused awhile, and shared their slight repast, 230
I've joined to hear the rustic jest or song,
And seen the happiest of the happy throng,
The foaming ale-horn in his rugged hand,
Stretched to the children of a stranger land;
While round the ring contagious laughter ran,
Delighted sits the joyous Irishman!—
Where is the heart's smile pictured on his brow?
Where his light song, and lighter jesting, now?
Where are the random shafts so sure to hit,
When Johnny feared, yet courted, Paddy's wit? 240
Where is his dauntless carriage, proud and high?
Where his bold "brow, and spirit-speaking eye?"
At home we vainly seek him! can *he* be
You crouching image of Despondency?

Whose rough "big coat," around him loosely rolled,
Veils the gaunt limbs its volumed skirts enfold;
Whose shoulders, bowed beneath the oppressor's load,
Seem spread to welcome an oppressor's rod!
Whose brow seems scarred with thought, whose eye appears
To curse the ground he waters with his tears; 250
Whose tongue, long used to false and flattering strains,
Speaks in the praise of those his heart disdains;
And owns, for law to rule the subject land,
"Dick Martin's" will, or "Dennis Browne's" command; (7)
Or calls it pride and duty to obey
Some slave, less strong, so less humane than they:
Who sucks his victim's blood; nor knows nor cares
Amidst *his* plenty, how that victim fares;
While he, unthinking what he gains or loses,
Gnaws the potatoes that his pig refuses!— 260

Look on the land that feeds him!—on the plain
In spring luxuriance waves the rising grain,
And all seems bright and green—so green and bright,
Its very freshness palls upon the sight;
But not for him shall autumn's plenty yield
The garnered increase of that ripening field:
The hungry priest, the parson, the tythe-proctor,
The venal magistrate, the road contractor,

The curse of Erin's land—the absentee,—
The agent, yet a greater curse than he,— 270
Landlords and middlemen and land surveyors,
Police and "peelers," sovereigns and mayors,
Gaugers, assessors, lawyers, all who can,
And last, not least, the lazy "gentleman,"
Contend whose rapine most shall blast his toil,
Or cease from wrangling, to "divide the spoil!"

Is it for this that war awakes in vain (*)
His "pride, and pomp, and circumstance" again;
While, glancing onward through the parted gloom,
Float the wide banner and the wanton plume, 280
And gleam the flashing bayonet and blade
Beneath Britannia's island-cross arrayed?
Hear me! 'twas *we* who stood while rolled afar
Back from *our* squares the shattered waves of war!
Before *our* levelled steel and fiercer frown,
Wrapped in the battle-clouds, NAPOLEON's sun went down!
And we must watch, and waste, and toil, and bleed, (*)
That *men* may calmly starve, and *monsters* feed!!!

Go! go! content to be the things ye are,
Pleased with the very badge of slave ye bear! 290
And plead, through years degrading as the last,*
The doubtful future, and more doubtful past.

* 1821.

Before the victor's shrine and bigot's sword,
Your faith instilled, as your blood was poured,
Beneath oppression's darkening array—
From Strongbow, down to your own Castlereagh;(19)
Yet twined, or stained, or strengthened with your tears,
The gathered fetters of a thousand years.
Go then! and make your parent land, that smiles
The best and brightest of the ocean isles,— 300
Make *her* a thing to pity and deride,
A beacon warning nations, not their guide!
Was it for *this* benignant Nature gave
Earth's greenest hills, the green sea's brightest wave?
Was it for this the purest streams were given?
The softest breezes of the mildest heaven?
A land, whose bosom pours its plenty forth
Bounteous o'er all—the Eden of the North?
A land that bears, whate'er may be the rest,
The purest, fairest, bravest, and the best? 310
Yet, from the cup that Nature's stintless hand
Shed, rich with blessings, on the favoured land,
She gave, what made the unnumbered gifts too few,
And tainted every boon—she gave it *you*;
Aye! and her sons, the generous and the brave,
Drag the vile chain, and bear the brand of slave:
Aye! crouch the slaves of such weak things as ye,
For fools ye *are*, when rogues ye fain *would* be!

Where fled the spirit of the mighty ones?
Where sleeps the spirit that *should* rouse their sons? 320
Where are the swords that once to Freedom led?
The gallant hearts for Liberty that bled?
When, through the clouds around its radiance furled,
Shall Erin's star shine forth, the day-star of the world?
'Tis vain! 'tis vain! no flashing sword-blades dawn
The first lone harbingers of Freedom's morn!
'Tis vain! 'tis vain! no trumpet call replies,
The captive drags his lengthening chain, and sighs,
Or looks where Hope, a bright but flattering star,
Still beams most fair when most she beams afar. 330
'Tis vain! 'tis vain! for Freedom hears no more
The one lone voice that speaks on Erin's shore;
To climes more blest with wing indignant flies,
Or dares not speak, so mutely strikes, and dies.

Such, when along the silvery sea-foam
My vessel bounded from her ocean-home,
And, from the joyous morning's welcome ray,
The stormy night wore heavily away,
While, as to meet the day-beam's living smile,
Above the green wave rose the greener isle, 340
The thoughts that on me with the morning broke,
And *thus* youth's once luxuriant spirit spoke:

Alas! it needs no hero's arm to lead
The patriot ranks to conquer or to bleed;
Nor o'er the storm to Freedom's glance unrolled,
Shall Erin's banners wave their emerald fold.
No! like the owls that from your ruined towers
Prey through the lapse of night's unvarying hours,
And ever with the breeze's lowly sigh
Mingle afar their solitary cry, 350
Born 'midst decay, in gloom congenial reared,
In darkness only to be found or feared,
Each, o'er the few that dread their tyrant's claw,
Ye sit, and give the subject village "law,"
And place, unable to be wise or just,
In folly's blinking majesty your trust.
Yet better hopes and better times appear
Through the long past of sorrow and of fear,
And come to shed their long-expected ray
Above the land ye darkened with your sway. 360

Before those gleams, unfriendly to their spoil,
The baffled plunderers of night recoil,
And, in the solitudes themselves have made,
Dream of the past, and hope the future shade;
While, as to share the welcome light, whose beam,
Free, on the slaves and tyrant's eyes, shall stream,

The heads are raised on which they based their throne,
And down the fabric topples on their own!

England! my own far country! though I roam
In warmer hearts to seek a dearer home, 370
Be *thou* still beautiful, and fair, and free,
As the wild waves that sweep thine own blue sea!
One sword there is that from its sheath shall fly,
Ere thou, like Erin, breathe a slave's deep sigh:
One heart there is, if now its pulses sleep,
Shall bleed for thee, ere thou shalt learn to weep:
One harp there is, if weak its tones may fall,
May yet be blended with the trumpet-call:—
And that faint song, and that one feeble sword—
Let them but lead to Freedom—felt and heard! 380

Thus, when, of old, above the peopled vale,
A thousand prophets bowed the knee to Baal, (11)
And where on Carmel's height they vainly stood,
Profaned the victim's with *their* streaming blood,
One only mocked the servile rite, and he
Knelt to the God whose yoke is Liberty.
The prayer was heard; above the adorer's head
The thunder rolled its accents deep and dread!
And through the clouds before his mandate riven,
Flashed the red pathway of the bolts of heaven. 390

Where are the false one's prophets? evening's beam
Set on their blood that gilded Kishon's stream.

England, my own fair country, yet again
Wanders to thee, my home, the wanderer's strain!
Still be thy sons as free, sincere, and bold,
Thy maids less silly, and perhaps less cold;
Green be thy fields; thy fleets unnumbered sweep
The heaving bosom of thy subject deep;
But rates, tithes, taxes, paupers, priests, and kings,
Consume less freely what thy plenty brings; 400
Thy rulers honest; sinecures abolished;
Pensions and rotten boroughs all demolished;
A minister no more thy guiding star;
King, Lords, and Commons, better than they are;
Let armies, mobs, or despots guide the state,—
The Devil,—but not an *Irish Magistrate*.
And ye, unless my lay be framed in vain,
Be, if ye can, just, honest, and humane;
So may the next that sings your praises, twine
To deck your brows, a fairer wreath than mine; 410
But *now*, rough, cold, and pitiless, flow on
Like winter's stream, my unrelenting song.

Yet, in the shabby throng that round me stand,
The lords and licensed plunderers of the land,

Not on one victim will I fix alone,
Nor quit the many to pursue the one.
Let parsons wring their "thousands" from the poor
They send half-famished from the unopening door;
Let wretched Paddy dig his tithe potatoes
To fill their pocket's unexplored "hiatus;"
Aye! that a priest, whose creed 'tis his to hate,
May ride his hunters, or may dine off plate,
Hoard untold gold, although he well might spare it,
And drive his gay barouche, and "sport" his claret.
Time was, indeed, ere, swayed by such desires,
Heaven's priests lived thus like Earth's vain lords and squires;
Ere God's word learnt to serve their needed turn,
And they to take what they forgot to earn.
Let "Peelers," when they will, and where they can,
Shoot, like a snipe, a ragged Irishman;
Let absentees to far St. James's wander,
Their Irish cash in English shops to squander,
And "living on" in Paris or in London,
Wonder at last to find that they are undone;
Or vainly curse or sigh for gold that lingers
In fond adhesion to an agent's fingers,
While that same agent to his gathering hoard
Adds what he plunders from his needier lord.
Give mayors and sovereigns customs, priests their dues,[13]
Gaugers, assessors, lawyers, what they choose;

And let the vile "et cætera"—the rest—
The vermin, nestling in our lion's crest,—
Make, by their endless screwing and their carving,
Green Erin's fields the very fields to starve in.
To *ye* I sing, to ye, whose fathers sold
Their own, their son's, their country's hopes for gold;
Or gave, for some few years of paltry breath,
A patriot's laurels, and a soldier's death.
Oh! meet descendants of your recreant sires,
Heirs of their "honour," "courage," and desires; 450
Whom no far lights lead onward through the gloom,
Warned by no feeling for the ills to come,
Whom conscience guides not from within; and fear
Has only ruled to make ye what ye are,—
Tyrants, yet crouching cowards,—only brave
In laying stripes upon the fettered slave,
Follow the path that leads ye to your ruin,
Punish the deeds that are of your own doing.

Lo! where yon creature goads his stumbling jade,
His "bit of blood," along the road he made, 460
And feels his pockets, and, to crown his bliss,
Hastens to win another job like this.
Yet, as he jogs along, with anxious eyes
Round and around in fear and dread he pries,

Sees in each stone a lurking villain's hat,
In every thorn an ambushed caravat.
Ride on! ride on! and hurry to the scene
Where in their hall your worthy peers convene,
And close the doors, and hope to shun your doom:
The muse is present in the jury-room. 470

Let some more practised pen and hand more cool
In just proportion blend the rogue and fool,
Paint the fond worshipper of power and pelf
Swayed by yet fonder worship of himself;
Who thinks that gain is glory, place is fame;
Who fancies conscience nothing—or a name;
And shrouds, beneath smooth words and smoother smiles,
A priest's ambition, and a woman's wiles.

Heap high the table! let your unread books
Add borrowed wisdom to your silly looks; 480
While, round the board, enthroned in misty state,
Darkly ye hold the darkening debate.
Have ye no roads to make?—Ye condescend
Those that ye made a year ago to mend!
Have ye, alas the day! no jails to build?—
Let those ye raised a year ago be filled.
Aye! meet and gossip! whisper! stare and wonder,
Because the ruined victim of your plunder,

Repressed his words, yet unrestrained his will,
Dares not to grumble though he dares to kill; 490
Then creep at midnight trembling forth, though backed
By balls and bayonets, and worse, "Peel's act,"—
Seize on some drunken wretch who staggers home;
And (hear me, Blackstone, Littleton, De Lolme!—)
Hie to your jury room or county hall,
Spies, prosecutors, evidences, all!
Jury and judge! aye! *all!* except the wretch
Whose place alone were fit for ye—Jack Ketch.
And, to relieve an Irish life's monotony,
Send him to hell, New Zealand, or to "Botany," 500
Yet triumph not! for vengeance and confusion
Wave o'er your heads the sword of retribution;
Where, as the precious conclave hastes away,
The wary bailiff stoops upon his prey!

Shift we the scene—two summer months are gone,
Or yet are passing, since these deeds were done;
And lo! since special sessions must be paid for,
They meet to unmake the very law they prayed for;
The self-same creature tracks the self-same road,
To sing his lamentable "palinode," 510

Shift we again the ever-varying scene,
Again the motley animals convene;

Stripped of their vesture of judicial ermine,
In native loathsomeness the paltry vermin
Seek how to fatten upon English bounty,
The "Pandemonium" of an Irish county!

Vain are your arts, your hopes, your bolted door;
The game is up, the toilsome chace is o'er:
In characters and places not your own
Ye meet, debate, decide, and ye are known!

Thus, if aright our fabled records tell
What once in earth's remoter age befel,
Some beast, less wise, or less courageous, tried
The borrowed terrors of a lion's hide:
Forth from the woods he bravely stalks—the rest
Fly the dread presence of the kingly beast:
Flushed with success so new, he next employs
The less dissembled terrors of his voice,
And, in unusual tones that voice arraying,
Begins the wretched roar that ends in braying:
Back to their plains the brutes indignant pass,
And strip the tawny mantle from, *an Ass*:
So too, like him, a hopeless, helpless band,
'Reft of your lion's boasted hide, ye stand;
So shall the crowd, that fled ye once, return,
And gaze to mock ye, or approach to spurn.

And ye, our lords and masters, shall the muse
Her passing tribute at your shrine refuse;
Or, safe in guarded silence, wander on,
Nor add your praises to her varied song?
And yet, when famine o'er the carrion land
Lashed the lank "garran" (14) that obeyed her hand;
(For she, like others, had reduced her state, as
She burnt her car to boil her last potatoes;)
Ye yielded, bribed or baffled by their league,
A patriot's project to a lord's intrigue; (15)
But gave, besides addresses and professions,
An Insurrection Act, and special sessions!
'Tis vain!—the muse that animates my strain
At Newgate's portal draws her passing rein.
And ye, who stood and died, nor ye alone,
Patriots or traitors,—Emmet and Tyrone! (16)
Say, shall the world, that wept, but could not save,
Scatter its wreaths or shroud upon your grave?
Yet, when he dreamed that Freedom's pinion fanned
The green flag, waving over the green land,
Who dares to blame the wretch whose wild desires
Aimed at the lights that led his warrior sires?
And ne'er did one who dared or hoped to bleed
For his dear country, or his dearer creed,
View the red wreath for saints and patriots twined,
With brow more proud, or eye more brightly blind?

Degraded, chained, suspected, and oppreſt,
Let Erin crouch, in "peace and plenty" bleſt:
Peace with the world! at home, relentless war;
Plenty produced at home, consumed afar!
While, as she kneels for bread, a blow is given,
And earth's proud masters would be lords of heaven.
Lo! where above the wondering mob that stand
Watching each motion of his lip and hand; 570
While his words fall in cadence with his fist,
Mutters or roars the lank-haired Calvinist!
Points to the hell that yawns for all below,
But spreads heaven's portals for himself and "Co."
Discards dull reason's lingering step, and flies
On fancy's owlet pinion to the skies!
Thus, when in Hera's gloom alone retired, (17)
Beneath the rock that shrouded and inspired,
Or when, more deeply and securely bleſt,
Mohammed dreamed of heaven on Mary's breast; 580
There, at the hour when e'en night's winds were still,
Swept o'er his couch the song of Israfil:
"Rise," said the thrilling melodies, "and come,
"Living, to view the spirits destined home,
"The immortal founts and bright cool streams that lave
"The bowers, where rest the faithful and the brave,
"Beneath the grove of Amaranth, that shades
"The deep retreats of heaven's eternal maids!

Where are the false one's prophets? evening's beam
Set on their blood that gilded Kishon's stream.

England, my own far country, yet again
Wanders to thee, my home, the wanderer's strain!
Still be thy sons as free, sincere, and bold,
Thy maids less silly, and perhaps less cold;
Green be thy fields; thy fleets unnumbered sweep
The heaving bosom of thy subject deep;
But rates, tithes, taxes, paupers, priests, and kings,
Consume less freely what thy plenty brings; 400
Thy rulers honest; sinecures abolished;
Pensions and rotten boroughs all demolished;
A minister no more thy guiding star;
King, Lords, and Commons, better than they are;
Let armies, mobs, or despots guide the state,—
The Devil,—but not an *Irish Magistrate*.
And ye, unless my lay be framed in vain,
Be, if ye can, just, honest, and humane;
So may the next that sings your praises, twine
To deck your brows, a fairer wreath than mine; 410
But *now*, rough, cold, and pitiless, flow on
Like winter's stream, my unrelenting song.

Yet, in the shabby throng that round me stand,
The lords and licensed plunderers of the land,

Not on one victim will I fix alone,
Nor quit the many to pursue the one.
Let parsons wring their "thousands" from the poor
They send half-famished from the unopening door;
Let wretched Paddy dig his tithe potatoes
To fill their pocket's unexplored "hiatus;"
Aye! that a priest, whose creed 'tis his to have,
May ride his hunters, or may dine off plate,
Hoard untold gold, although he well might spare it,
And drive his gay barouche, and "sport" his claret.
Time was, indeed, ere, swayed by such desires,
Heaven's priests lived thus like Earth's vain lords and squires;
Ere God's word learnt to serve their needed turns,
And they to take what they forgot to earn.
Let "Peelers," when they will, and where they can,
Shoot, like a snipe, a ragged Irishman;
Let absentees to far St. James's wander,
Their Irish cash in English shops to squander,
And "living on" in Paris or in London,
Wonder at last to find that they are undone;
Or vainly curse or sigh for gold that fingers
In fond adhesion to an agent's fingers,
While that same agent to his gathering hoard
Adds what he plunders from his needier lord.
Give mayors and sovereigns customs, priests their "due,"[13]
Gaugers, assessors, Lawyers, what they choose,

And let the vile "et cætera"—the rest—
The vermin, nestling in our lion's crest,—
Make, by their endless screwing and their carving,
Green Erin's fields the very fields to starve in.
To *ye* I sing, to ye, whose fathers sold
Their own, their son's, their country's hopes for gold;
Or gave, for some few years of paltry breath,
A patriot's laurels, and a soldier's death.
Oh! meet descendants of your recreant sires,
Heirs of their "honour," "courage," and desires; 450
Whom no far lights lead onward through the gloom,
Warned by no feeling for the ills to come,
Whom conscience guides not from within; and fear
Has only ruled to make ye what ye are,—
Tyrants, yet crouching cowards,—only brave
In laying stripes upon the fettered slave,
Follow the path that leads ye to your ruin,
Punish the deeds that are of your own doing.

Lo! where yon creature goads his stumbling jade,
His "bit of blood," along the road he made, 460
And feels his pockets, and, to crown his bliss,
Hastens to win another job like this.
Yet, as he jogs along, with anxious eyes
Round and around in fear and dread he pries,

Not on one victim will I fix alone,
Nor quit the many to pursue the one.
Let parsons wring their "thousands" from the poor
They send half-famished from the unopening door;(12)
Let wretched Paddy dig his tithe potatoes
To fill their pocket's unexplored "hiatus;"
Aye! that a priest, whose creed 'tis his to hate,
May ride his hunters, or may dine off plate,
Hoard untold gold, although he well might spare it,
And drive his gay barouche, and "sport" his claret.
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Gaugers, assessors, Lawyers, what they choose;

NOTES.

NOTES.

Note 1, page 7, line 2.

Erin! lost Erin! as I pondered o'er
Thy classic page of legendary lore.

Though this is founded on evidence so suspicious as to be inadmissible material for history, yet there is little in the old legends on which the reputation of Irish antiquity rests, that is not a fair subject as I have used it. Yet when Agricola, after seeing that from four to seven or eight legions had been forty years engaged in the conquest of Britain, proposed, by way of summer occupation, to undertake the subjugation of Ireland with *one;* and when Tacitus is our authority for this, we cannot but admit that the glories of Tara, the Dalgais, &c. &c. at best rest on *very* slight foundations.

Note 2, page 12, line 124.

Give rogues at liberty the power to rob,
And all, the very gibbet, is a job!

Of jobbing I shall say little, but will define it at length.—Jobbing, then, is the application of public money to private purposes, and is chiefly conducted by means of excluding the public purse from the benefit of purchasing otherwise than from monopolists. A road is not repaired, nor a jail built, nor a bridge made, nor is any public work executed in Ireland, by the contractors giving the advantage of better terms to the public, but

they are a perquisite of the grand jurors and their creatures.—A sort of deputy-gentleman obtains perhaps 10 miles of high-road to repair; for this he receives perhaps 1*s.* 6*d.* per perch, which he makes over in portions of one or two miles to tenants, or creatures of some sort, who perhaps give labour to the amount of one tenth of what could be obtained were the same sum brought into the public market; and though these gentlemen loudly disclaim turning any of this money into their own pockets, yet they will expect a higher rent and more punctual payment from such a tenant as is thus favoured at the public expense.

Note 3, page 12, line 128.

And ye, whom thus my gentle strains address,
Strutted in boots, "Squireens," or worse, or less!

A "Squireen" means literally a little squire, "een" being the Irish diminutive; ex. gr. "poteen" "spalpeen" "Jackeen," &c. &c.

Note 4, page 13, line 138.

Ye strive to stand where once before ye stood,
And job, since that *alone is* gain, *in* blood.

The charge implied is heavy, and not easily proved; but what little I do know I shall say.—Since the introduction of the Insurrection Act into this county, five persons have been shot in it by the police and military,—four killed on the spot; the murders committed in the same period in the same space are three. (I mean only the murders committed by the country-people, not repeating those I have before mentioned, not less unjustifiable homicide, in the eye of English law, but not of the Irish administrators of it.)

Should I be told that there was no possible gain to result to the magistracy, I answer, that I have in my desk a letter from Secretary Gregory to the High Sheriff of the county, in which he

says that there are upwards of 1,400 applications for places of chief constable!!! that this letter is in reply to the petition of an Irishman who was desirous of obtaining one of these places, to which were attached the names of sixteen magistrates; that many magistrates applied for the situation of chief magistrate of police, worth £800. per annum; and that all these situations were occasioned by the introduction of this Act.

I will now point out what falsehoods and exaggerations were descended to by these men to obtain these objects, and how ignorantly *many* lent themselves to the designs of a few.—For many there are incapable of wilful falsehood, that out of simple courtesy declined putting on their oaths the men on whose statements these proceedings were founded.

Early last spring (1822) a paper appeared signed by twenty-eight magistrates, in the papers of the day, declaring, that amongst other places, the town and liberties of Callan were in a state of insurrection. I had lived in that place for three months, and had found it perfectly tranquil the whole time, and therefore took the trouble to make many and minute enquiries into the reasons of this extraordinary measure: the only reasons I could obtain were these:—that on Sundays many of the bad characters who came in for mass, met at the public houses to drink; that in "98" a smith in Callan, still alive, was suspected of repairing arms for the insurgents; and that if Callan was not now in a state of disturbance, it was in danger of shortly becoming so. To these reasons, or the last of them, I replied, and my reader will probably do the same, that as the Insurrection Act gave equal permission and direction for the convened magistracy to declare a place to be in danger of shortly becoming disturbed, and as these men owned that they declared it was *actually disturbed*, in order to make sure of obtaining the Insurrection Act shortly, it is plain such men were not fit persons to trust with such an engine. A more rational cause was assigned by the country in general, and their voice shall be repeated here. They said that Callan was

put under the Insurrection Act, in order to defray a large proportion of the expense, which would otherwise have been defrayed by the tenantry of one or two persons. The subsequent distribution of the expense sanctions the suspicion of many, and my conviction.

Had not the administration of this act been absolutely imbecile, some good might have resulted; but the magistrates finding it expensive, and that some of them were arrested at the special sessions, forthwith met, and with about as much right as they had to suspend the law against sheep-stealing, resolved not to act upon the new law, but to hold it, *in terrorem*, over the heads of the people;—and the engine of oppression was certainly used with *some leniency*, and little discretion or respect; one person *only* was transported for having in his possession two ounces of lead, which *he* deposed to having had for two years, and no other case warranting any conviction occurred.

It was said that at this time shots were discharged almost every night in the utmost profusion. I passed forty nights on the look-out, and never heard but two shots, and those the same night.

Three men of the name of Shehan, at Windgap, were robbed of arms. They not only said, but swore, that upwards of fifty shots had been fired into their dwelling.—No vestige was to be traced the next morning, but a single shot fired from a small pistol, which I had about me, brought down a square foot of plaister.

An informer, whose informations were at least credited, in my hearing told a magistrate that on Easter Sunday night at twelve, his dwelling had been attacked by White Boys,—that he had escaped through them. On *that* night, and at *that* hour, his cabin was surrounded by myself and my soldiers, as closely as possible, while another highlander discharged a musket at a distance, that I might satisfy myself whether our informer would not come out to join what he might take for Captain Rock's militia-men. We waited upwards of half an hour, and no person stirred; but at the end of three weeks, the impudent lie I have detailed was the result.

I might add much more, but trust that this will be fully sufficient. This was the style of information that brought on the county Kilkenny an act that cost some lives, and, what is more a matter of interest to the magistrates, some money.

Note 5, page 15, line 180.

Lo! as I sing, the cabin's shattered door
Resists his angry Reverence no more.

Many of these expeditions I have attended, but the only thing like arms or ammunition we found, which it was deemed essential to secure, was a broken pewter spoon. A brother officer quartered about seven miles from me, rendered the country the more important service of capturing a broken pewter plate. On Easter Sunday night, the magistrate who conducted myself and twenty loaded firelocks from night-fall till near day-light, had administered to me in the morning the communion as usual on that day.

Of this person I must say that he was uniformly humane and even gentle in the administration of the Insurrection Act, of which the whole trouble fell upon him, in an extensive district, where he was the only efficient magistrate; and therefore in his and some *few* other cases there is a necessity for the clergy personally exerting themselves to enforce the decrees of their less peaceful brethren.

Note 6, page 16, line 210.

If there be one perchance, *I deem amiss,*
The whiskered bully of a cause like this!

I speak because I do not wish to appear ignorant of the possible consequences of so publicly and explicitly avowing my opinions, and it is well to declare myself ready to redeem my pledge in either way. The grey goose quill I wield with some diffidence, for writing is not the professional accomplishment of a soldier. The other weapons I refer to, I should adopt with some regret,

unless where I thought that my appellant could fairly appropriate my accusations, and then I should throw away all feelings but those that I should retain if about to shoot at a wolf or a mad dog.

Note 7, page 18, like 254.

And owns for law to rule the subject land
"Dick Martin's" will, or "Dennis Browne's" command.

The autocrats of Mayo and Connemara hold here the place I cannot refuse to such conspicuous characters.—"Go to Hell or Connaught" is an *old* saying;—but between the worthies I mention, it is to this day a matter of doubtful selection which destination is preferable. Neither of these men are personally cruel or oppressive; but it is to the acts of their *agents* and *supporters*, that much must be attributed that they would probably disclaim!

Note 8, page 19, line 277.

Is it for this that war awakes in vain
His "pride, and pomp, and circumstance" again.

The flower of the British army is employed in Ireland, to effect an object out of the power of military force to attain.

Note 9, page 19, line 287.

And we must toil, and watch, and waste, and bleed,
That men may calmly starve and monsters feed.

When I say *we*, I speak as a member of the British army, though I was not sixteen, and, of course, not in the service, when the war ended.

I have heard the veterans of Spain and Waterloo naturally contrast their past and present duties, which latter, however disagreeable they may be, they discharge, when at all left to themselves, with a zeal and moderation more creditable to them than to those who seem to think the latter qualification of harsh but necessary acts at best weakness.

Note 10, page 20, line 296.

Beneath oppression's darkening array,
From Strongbow, down to your own Castlereagh.

The measures of Strongbow—forts, garrisons, burning, and beheading, were more fitted to his day than those which Lord Castlereagh applied to the visible darkness of ours. Of the two, the first was an unenlightened military conqueror; the last, a gloomy and narrow-minded, shuffling, and deceitful political agitator, and more cruel, for more cunning.

Note 11, page 23, line 381.

Thus, when of old, above the peopled vale,
A thousand prophets bowed the knee to Baal.

Vide Kings. Book 1. Chap. xviii.

Note 12, page 25, line 417.

Let parsons wring their "thousands" from the poor
They send half-famished from the unopening door.

Of the avarice and oppression exercised to obtain wealth or power by these excrescences on society, I can hardly speak more severely than is just, but certainly more than is either politic to speak, or pleasant to hear. The primate died the other day worth £280,000. having probably for some years kept more than one servant better paid than many of the curates on his diocese. Another "limb of the church," flying his country to save the life he had forfeited to her laws, *is said* to have raised nearly £90,000. by renewing leases in the interval allowed him to enable him to evade the laws, which are so unequally administered to rich and poor. In the parish where I write, the rector has £3000. a year tithes, the curate £75.; the rector is, from necessity arising from bodily infirmity, an absentee. The Catholic population is nearly 20,000. the Protestant not 200; the Catholics meet to worship in a half-finished chapel without a roof, while the Protestants meet in their

snug church; and having expelled the Catholics previously to the division, vote at a vestry that the parish shall be taxed £52. to purchase a stove, and moreover that *they* shall pay for the fuel it consumes continually; they also make these unfortunate creatures pay for the very bread and wine used in the administration of the Sacrament. All this is pretty nearly illegal, certainly a most infamous imposition, that none but the clergy would have impudence and rapacity sufficient to execute or sanction. How little these shepherds attend to aught but the shearing, and how unfit they are to preach or practice the charities of Christianity, may be guessed from the fact, that in 1823 an Irish Bishop expressed himself most indignantly at hearing that the bell belonging to the church in a ruined tower was used to summon the Catholics to *their* worship. His Grace did not probably know, that the very bell was erected by joint subscription of the two sects, for their common use, forty years back, and the compact was violated by the Protestant minister, who availed himself of the penal laws.

Note 13, page 25, line 439.

Give mayors and sovereigns customs; priests their "dues;"
Gaugers, assessors, Lawyers, what they choose.

This phrase applies to the mode of paying the Catholic clergy.

Note 14, page 30, line 542.

And, yet, when famine o'er the carrion land,
Lashed the lank "garran" that obeyed her hand.

Irish for a wretched dog-horse.

Note 15, page 30, line 545.

Ye yielded, bribed, or baffled by their league,
A patriot's project to a lord's intrigue.

In the Sessions of 1822, Sir John Newport's bill to restrain the profligacy of Grand Juries in Ireland, was thrown out by the influence of Lord Donoughmore. Yet the almost feudal oppression of

the Insurrection Act was sanctioned by our legislators, more willing to confirm the existence of wrong, than to remedy the evils that wrong has produced.

Note 16, page 30, line 552.

And ye! who stood and died, nor ye alone,
Patriots or traitors—Emmet and Tyrone.

The narrow line which separates a rebel and a patriot, seems drawn through the names of these men, and others, too frequent in Irish history, so doubtfully, that it is not yet decided what they or their motives were. Emmet died the eloquent and indignant advocate of his country, justifying the line of defence he had adopted for *her*, and the prophet of the consummation which her degradation has since reached;—with his last breath he denied the imputation of having sought to place Ireland under French protection.

Tyrone, a gallant and long successful opponent of English power in Ireland, perhaps forfeited a part of his glory by submitting to live a pensioner at the British Court; yet these are names that must prove what the difference is between successful treason and unsuccessful resistance to tyranny. Yet this difference amounts to *all*, in worldly estimation, and the stakes of the game are life and death, honour and infamy. Such are the awards of *men* in these cases, and posterity do not always reverse the unjust decrees of foregoing ages.

Note 17, page 31, line 577 to 598.

The simile is used as I have used it, in Swift's "Tale of a Tub," and it is thence that I have borrowed it. The passage alluded to is from the Koran, where Mahomet, offered by an angel to be conveyed by him to the Seventh Heaven, prefers being carried thither on the Caiba, or holy ass—or camel, or some such brute.

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